

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are presently pending. Claims 1-20 are subject to restriction. Claim 8 has been amended. Claims 17-20 have been canceled. Claims 21-24 are new.

The four different Groups are set forth in the Restriction Requirement as follows:

- I: Claims 1-7, drawn to a wafer, classified in class 257, subclass 618.
- II: Claims 8-13, drawn to an IC device, classified in class 257, subclass 663.
- III: Claims 14-16, drawn to a system, classified in class 257, subclass 334.
- IV: Claims 17-20, drawn to a method of making, classified in class 438, subclass 270.

Applicants provisionally elect, with traverse, Group II (*i.e.*, claims 8-13).

In so traversing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration or modification of the pending Restriction Requirement. Applicants initially submit that all claims from all Groups are directed toward semiconductor apparatuses and manufacturing methods that involve support coatings formed on active surfaces thereof, such that a comprehensive search and examination based on this defining characteristic would not be unduly burdensome given the state of the art within the IC manufacturing industry. Accordingly, examination of all Groups should be possible. Nevertheless, Applicants have canceled all pending method claims in order to better focus and expedite prosecution of the present case. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue these canceled claims, as well as any finally non-elected and other claims, in this or a continuing application.

With respect to the remaining claims, Applicants respectfully submit that Groups I and III should also be examined along with Group II. Despite the characterizations made with respect to wafers, IC devices and systems (of IC devices and substrates), it is well known within the semiconductor arts that these items are all closely related. In fact, as described in detail in the present specification, the "system" as is presently claimed is derived from combining an "IC device" as is presently claimed with a substrate, with the presently claimed "IC device" being derived from singulating it from a "wafer" as is presently claimed. Again, the pertinent feature from all claims is the "support coating," which remains with the

various inventive embodiments through every claimed development and permutation. In grouping claims for search and examination purposes then, "wafers" having support coatings are sufficiently similar in nature to "IC devices" having support coatings, which are sufficiently similar in nature to "systems" of these same IC devices having support coatings.


Furthermore, Applicants have deliberately crafted and revised the pending claims such that appropriate dependencies are created to better reflect the substantially similar nature of these different items. For example, claim 14 depends from claim 13, such that each of claims 14-16 would necessarily be allowable if claim 13 were allowed. Similarly, claim 21 depends from claim 13, such that each of claims 21-24 would also necessarily be allowable if claim 13 were allowed. Applicants respectfully submit that the differences between Groups I, II and III are insufficient then to merit a restriction between these Groups. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request a modification of the pending Restriction Requirement to at least permit the examination of Groups I, II and III together in the first instance.

It is believed that no fees are due at this time. If any fees are due in connection with this Response to Restriction Requirement or for this application in general, however, then the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0388, referencing Docket No. NSC1P131X3. If there are any questions or issues remaining, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,  
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